

ACCIDENT

Aircraft Type and Registration:	Piel CP301A Emeraude, G-AYEC	
No & Type of Engines:	1 Continental Motors Corp C90-14F piston engine	
Year of Manufacture:	1958 (Serial no: 249)	
Date & Time (UTC):	18 August 2012 at 1055 hrs	
Location:	2 nm south of RAF Waddington, Lincolnshire	
Type of Flight:	Private	
Persons on Board:	Crew - 1	Passengers - None
Injuries:	Crew - 1 (Minor)	Passengers - N/A
Nature of Damage:	Main wing spar cracked, damage to engine, propeller and cockpit area	
Commander's Licence:	Private Pilot's Licence	
Commander's Age:	63 years	
Commander's Flying Experience:	511 hours (of which 472 were on type) Last 90 days - None Last 28 days - None	
Information Source:	Aircraft Accident Report Form submitted by the pilot	

Synopsis

The pilot became distracted during his pre-flight inspection of the aircraft and did not check the fuel state. The aircraft subsequently took off with an almost empty fuel tank and the engine stopped running soon after. The pilot carried out a forced landing and, although the aircraft was badly damaged, he escaped serious injury.

History of the flight

On 13 May 2012, the aircraft suffered a propeller strike whilst taxiing to depart from RAF Waddington. This necessitated the aircraft remaining at RAF Waddington, while repairs and a detailed engine inspection were carried out. On 18 August 2012, with the work completed and a Permit Flight Release Certificate issued, the pilot

(the same as on the day of the earlier incident) prepared to fly the aircraft back to its home base.

The pilot conducted a thorough inspection of the aircraft and the engine installation, while it was still inside the hangar, but became distracted during the process and did not check the fuel state. A further distraction occurred after engine start, when he had to shut down in order to discuss the return of a security pass with station personnel. When the pilot subsequently taxied the aircraft to Runway 21 for takeoff, he thought he had completed all necessary checks. In fact, the aircraft's fuel tank was almost empty and its engine stopped running soon after takeoff.

The pilot carried out a forced landing in a field of crops. Although the aircraft inverted and was substantially damaged, he was wearing a four-point harness and escaped serious injury. The cockpit area was partially crushed but he was able to kick out the passenger door and escape from the wreckage. The emergency services were alerted and were quickly on scene.

The pilot attributed the accident entirely to human factors, having been distracted more than once during his pre-flight preparations. Additionally, he was not in current flying practice, as he had not flown since the aircraft was damaged more than three months earlier.